

## **ABSTRACT**

**DISSERTATION:** A Performance Guide to Selected Arias from Daron Hagen's Opera *Amelia* Through the Study of Selected Hagen Art Songs

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Promoting contemporary song and opera literature empowers students to continually educate themselves and explore the overwhelming body of vocal repertoire that exists. A *Performance Guide to Selected Arias from Daron Hagen's Opera Amelia Through the Study of Selected Hagen Art Songs* seeks to contribute to the existing literature on the works of Hagen by providing the following: 1) a deeper understanding of the compositional techniques Hagen employs within his vocal works, 2) knowledge of his two-act opera *Amelia*, 3) a greater understanding of how to prepare Hagen's arias through the acknowledgement and exploration of his art song catalog, 4) an understanding of why it would benefit collegiate students to study this repertoire and how this model might be suitable for studying and performing the works of other living composers of art song and opera, 5) a desire to explore new works by other living composers.

This study presents a unique approach to preparing contemporary American arias, focusing solely on five selected arias from Hagen's opera *Amelia*. Each aria is paired with three preparatory art songs written by Hagen. The song selections feature a musical characteristic/compositional device that is present in the given aria. This approach will ensure that the students

are preparing the music in a methodical and thorough manner while developing knowledge about living composers.

These arias may be erroneously excluded from students' repertoire because they are mislabeled as being overly-complex atonal works that might not be pleasing to the performer/audience. Furthermore, while the scores are available for purchase, the music is not widely publicized. Through the examination of selected art songs for each aria/voice type, this dissertation works to promote and assist young artists in developing an appreciation for new repertoire and living composers like Hagen and to shatter the misconceptions associated with new music.